

Program Standards and Teaching Performance Expectations for the Preliminary Education Specialist Credential: Visual Impairments

Program Standard 7: Effective Literacy Instruction for Students with Visual Impairments

The credential program's coursework and supervised field experiences prepare candidates to provide effective literacy instruction for students with visual impairments, including students who identify as deafblind, birth through age 22. Coursework and supervised field experiences encompass the study of effective means of teaching literacy across all disciplines^{1,2} based on California's State Board of Education (SBE)-adopted [English Language Arts \(ELA\) and Literacy Standards](#), [English Language Development \(ELD\) Standards](#), [Braille Reading Standards](#), [Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations](#), and [Preschool Learning Foundations](#). Program coursework and supervised field experiences are aligned with the current, SBE-adopted [English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework](#), including the crosscutting themes of Foundational Skills, Meaning Making, Language Development, Effective Expression, and Content Knowledge, as well as the *Guidelines for Programs Serving Students with Visual Impairments*, [California Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework](#), and [California Preschool Curriculum Framework](#). The program emphasizes the relationships among the five themes, including the importance of the foundational skills to student learning across all themes and how progress in the other themes also supports progress in the foundational skills. Through the integration of literacy coursework and supervised clinical practice, candidates learn that student instruction in each of the themes is essential and should occur concurrently (rather than sequentially), with emphasis based on grade-level standards. Candidates also learn that for multilingual and English learner students, concurrent instruction in each of the themes through integrated and designated ELD is critical.

Grounded in Universal Design for Learning and asset-based pedagogies,³ the program supports the development of candidates' knowledge, skills, and abilities expressed in the Teaching Performance Expectations to provide effective literacy instruction that is organized,

¹ Literacy comprises reading, writing, speaking, and listening; these processes are closely intertwined and should be understood to include oral, written, visual, and multimodal communication. The themes of the *ELA/ELD Framework* (Foundational Skills, Meaning Making, Language Development, Effective Expression, and Content Knowledge) crosscut the four strands of the ELA/literacy standards (Reading [Literature, Informational Text, Foundational Skills], Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language) and the three parts of the ELD standards (Interacting in Meaningful Ways [Communicative Modes], Learning About How English Works [Language Processes], and Using Foundational Literacy Skills). In practice, these themes, strands, and parts are overlapping and should be integrated among themselves and across all disciplines.

² For students with visual impairments the terms reading, writing, listening, and speaking should be broadly interpreted. For example, reading could include the use of braille, screen-reader technology, low vision devices, or other assistive devices, while writing could include the use of a scribe, computer, or speech-to-text technology. In a similar vein, speaking and listening for students who identify as deafblind could include tactile or pro-tactile American Sign Language, sign-supported speech, or other means of communication.

³ [Asset-based pedagogies](#) view the diversity that students bring to the classroom, including culture, language, disability, socio-economic status, immigration status, and sexuality as characteristics that add value and strength to classrooms and communities.

comprehensive, systematic, evidence based, culturally and linguistically sustaining, and responsive to students' age and prior language and literacy development. Candidates learn the power of language (whether spoken, signed, written, or symbolic) to understand and transform the world and to create socially just learning environments. The program builds candidates' understanding that high-quality literacy instruction integrates all strands of the ELA/literacy standards, all parts of the ELD standards, and other disciplinary standards to develop students' capacities as effective and critical readers, writers, listeners, and speakers.

The study of high-quality literacy instruction in the program also incorporates the following elements of the [California Comprehensive State Literacy Plan](#):

- a) Principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion, as well as principles of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), including books and other instructional material technologies, and practices that are asset-based and culturally and linguistically responsive, affirming, and sustaining⁴
- b) [Multi-Tiered System of Support](#), including best first instruction; targeted, supplemental instruction for students whose literacy skills are not progressing as expected toward grade-level standards; and intensive intervention for individuals who have not benefited from supplemental support
- c) Instruction that is responsive to individual students' age, language and literacy development, communication needs, and literacy goals; that engages families and communities as educational partners; and that is reflective of social and emotional learning and trauma-informed practices
- d) Incorporation of the [California Dyslexia Guidelines](#)
- e) Integrated and designated ELD
- f) Knowledge of how to promote multiliteracy in both English-medium and multilingual programs
- g) Assessment for various purposes, including formative, progress monitoring, and summative literacy assessment; screening and diagnostic assessments to determine students' literacy profiles, including communication needs and English learner typologies, to identify potential difficulties in reading and writing, including risk for dyslexia, and to determine strengths and needs in functional vision, learning media, and expanded core curriculum and their programmatic implications

Consistent with the *ELA/ELD Framework*, candidates learn instructional practices, through coursework and supervised field experiences, that are active, motivating, and engaging and to

⁴ Culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and funds of knowledge are all instructional approaches that affirm students' cultural lives—both family and community—and incorporate this knowledge into the classroom and collectively deem students' lived experiences as assets. These practices affirm the diversity that students bring to the classroom, including culture, language, disability, socio-economic status, immigration status, sexual orientation, and gender identity as characteristics that add value and strength to classrooms and communities. They include instructional approaches that leverage the cultural and linguistic experiences of students to make learning more relevant and effective.

provide literacy instruction that is appropriate for the range of learners' ages and development—infant, toddler, prekindergarten, early and middle childhood, and adolescent. Candidates learn that effective practices begin with building on students' cultural and linguistic assets, including home languages and dialects, backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge, including family and community, in all instruction. The program makes clear the importance of collaborating with other educators to provide literacy instruction. Candidates also learn that instructional practices vary according to students' learning profiles and goals, age, English language proficiency, and assessed strengths and needs and include, as appropriate, direct instruction, collaborative learning, and inquiry-based learning. Candidates learn to create environments that promote students' autonomy in learning, including providing choices in reading and other literacy-related activities, as well as the value of guided self-assessment and goal setting for student independence, motivation, and learning. Candidates also learn ways to collaborate and partner with families and communities ensuring that families are welcomed, informed, heard, and included in literacy development opportunities.

Consistent with the California *Guidelines for Programs Serving Students with Visual Impairments*, the program prepares candidates to provide literacy instruction in consultation and collaboration with general education teachers and other service providers that is responsive to students' wide range of abilities and functional vision as well as to students' linguistic, cognitive, and social strengths. They learn to read, write, proofread, and interline alphabetic and fully contracted Unified English braille as well as produce braille with a braille writer and other technology and braille production methods. Candidates learn about the impact of a sensory disability, including ocular and cerebral visual impairments and limited access to incidental learning, on literacy development, including language development and content knowledge, and they learn multisensory strategies to address this development. Candidates learn the importance of the expanded core curriculum (ECC)⁵ and directly teaching concepts that are typically learned incidentally as well as providing experiential and hands-on learning opportunities. They learn to assess and provide direct ECC instruction, particularly in the areas of compensatory or functional academic skills, use of assistive technology, and sensory efficiency skills, to support students' literacy learning. Candidates learn that compensatory skills address concept development, braille and communication skills, listening skills, study and organizational skills, and accessing the general curriculum. The program also addresses the value of specific itinerant services and AAC technologies for children with multiple disabilities and complex communication needs.

The program teaches candidates to conduct specialized assessments to determine the impact of students' visual impairments on their literacy development and to identify optimal learning and communication media and settings. These include functional vision assessments, which determine the extent of what students can see in a variety of learning environments, and learning media assessments, which determine how students use visual, tactile, and auditory media to learn and the literacy formats (print with or without optical devices, large print,

⁵ The expanded core curriculum provides a framework for instruction in a specialized set of nine vision-related skills for students who are visually impaired. These include compensatory skills; orientation and mobility; social interaction; independent living; recreation and leisure; sensory efficiency; assistive technology; career education; and self-determination. ([Program Guidelines for Students Who are Visually Impaired](#); [Perkins School for the Blind](#))

braille, digital, or dual media, with or without technology) that are best suited for different tasks.

In addition, the program teaches candidates about the impact of deafblindness on literacy learning and receptive and expressive communication. Candidates learn tactile and other instructional approaches to teach literacy to students who identify as deafblind. They also learn about communicating with students who identify as deafblind via tactile American Sign Language, pro-tactile American Sign Language, and haptics and to collaborate with specialists and interveners for hearing assessments and to directly support students' literacy learning.

7a. Foundational Skills⁶

The Education Specialist Visual Impairments credential program offers coursework and supervised field experiences that include evidence-based means of teaching the foundational skills to all students as a part of a comprehensive literacy program, with special emphasis in transitional kindergarten through grade three. Foundational skills include print/braille concepts, including pre-braille skills (e.g., tactual discrimination, finger sensitivity, tracking), letters of the print alphabet, braille letters and symbols, including contracted braille, and braille mechanics/hand movements; phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness; phonics, spelling, and word recognition; decoding and encoding; morphological awareness; and text reading fluency, including accuracy, prosody (expression), and rate (an indicator of automaticity).

Through the program, candidates learn that effective instruction in foundational reading skills is structured and organized as well as direct, systematic, and explicit. They also learn the impact of contracted braille on mapping sound-symbol correspondences and spelling and the use of various learning media (braille, large print, optical devices, digital, or dual media) on reading fluency, specifically reading rate. The program ensures that candidates understand that instruction in phonological awareness and phonics includes phonemic awareness; letter-sound, spelling-sound, and sound-symbol correspondences; spelling patterns; and practice in connected, decodable text. Candidates learn that instruction in foundational skills, particularly text reading fluency, also emphasizes spelling and syllable patterns, semantics, morphology, and syntax. As a result, candidates learn the connections among the foundational skills, language, and cognitive skills that support students as they learn to read and write increasingly complex disciplinary texts with comprehension and effective expression. The program also teaches that decoding requires mapping of spellings to their pronunciation, while encoding requires mapping of phonemes to their spellings, and emphasizes teaching both in ways that reflect their reciprocal relationship. Accordingly, the program teaches candidates to provide explicit instruction for young children in letter formation, through printing, producing braille, keyboarding, or other assistive technology as needed, in conjunction with applicable foundational skills and to help children apply their encoding skills in comprehensive writing instruction.

The program also includes evidence-based means of teaching foundational skills to multilingual and English learner students while they are simultaneously developing oral English language

⁶ See also the [Resource Guide to Foundational Skills of the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts](#).

proficiency, and in some cases literacy skills in an additional language.⁷ The program teaches candidates to plan foundational skills instruction based on students' previous literacy experiences in their home languages and to differentiate instruction using guidance from the *ELA/ELD Framework*, including knowledge of cross-language transfer between the home languages and English.

The program teaches candidates that effective instruction in foundational skills employs early intervention strategies informed by ongoing measures of student progress and diagnostic techniques and includes tiered supports in inclusive settings⁸ for students with reading, writing, or other literacy difficulties and disabilities, including students with complex communication needs or at risk for or with dyslexia. Candidates learn to monitor students' progress based on their knowledge of critical milestones of foundational skill development and to adjust and differentiate instruction for students whose skills are not progressing as expected toward grade-level standards. Candidates also learn how to collaborate with students' families and guardians as well as with teachers, specialists, school psychologists, other professionals, and administrators from the school or district to help conduct comprehensive literacy assessments in coordination with assessment teams, including specialized assessments related to visual impairments; develop Individualized Education Plans for students, including students at risk for and with dyslexia; support classroom teachers as they plan and provide supplemental instruction; and provide accommodations through direct supplemental support and/or intensive intervention as appropriate. The program provides supervised, guided practice in clinical settings that allow candidates to provide initial, supplemental, or intensive intervention instruction in foundational skills, particularly at beginning levels of decoding.

7b. Meaning Making

Coursework and supervised field experiences emphasize meaning making as the central purpose for interacting with and interpreting texts, composing texts, engaging in research, participating in discussions, speaking with others, and listening to, viewing, and giving presentations. This includes the use of braille and other optical devices and/or AAC devices as appropriate for students with visual impairments. The program addresses literal and inferential comprehension with all students at all grades and in all disciplines; it highlights the impact of incidental learning on comprehension and the need to make connections with and expand students' prior knowledge and experiences. In addition, the program addresses the importance of attending to and recognizing others' perspectives (theory of mind) through nuances in text descriptions. The program also teaches the importance of attending to a range of higher-order cognitive skills at all grades appropriate to students' development, such as reasoning, inferencing, perspective taking, transfer/generalization, and critical reading, writing, listening, and speaking across disciplines. Candidates learn to directly teach students to recognize and understand inferences and nuances in text descriptions that are typically learned incidentally. The program ensures that candidates understand that among the contributors to meaning making are language, including vocabulary and grammatical and discourse-level

⁷ See updated [Bilingual Authorization Program Standards and new Bilingual Teaching Performance Expectations](#).

⁸ See the California Department of Education (CDE)/WestEd 2021 publication, [California's Progress Toward Achieving ONE SYSTEM: Reforming Education to Serve All Students](#).

understandings; content knowledge; motivation and engagement; comprehension monitoring; and in the case of reading and writing, the ability to recognize and produce printed or braille words and use the alphabetic code to express ideas automatically and efficiently with understanding.

The program highlights the importance of providing students opportunities to interact with a range of print/braille and digital, high-quality literary and informational texts that are developmentally appropriate, fully inclusive, culturally and linguistically relevant, free from visual bias, and affirming as listeners, readers, speakers, and writers and to share their understandings, insights, and responses in collaboration with others. Through coursework and supervised field experiences, candidates learn to engage students in reading, listening, speaking or communicating symbolically or tactilely, writing, and viewing closely (i.e., with close and thoughtful attention) to draw evidence from texts, ask and answer questions, and support analysis, reflection, and research. Candidates also learn to promote deep and sustained reading of increasingly complex texts and to plan instruction, including intentional scaffolding and integration of students' assets, based on an analysis of the text complexity of instructional materials and the integration of meaning making with other themes.

7c. Language Development

Coursework and supervised field experiences emphasize language development as the cornerstone of literacy, learning, and relationship building and as a social process (including pragmatics) and meaning making system. Candidates learn that it is with and through language that students learn, think, and express information, ideas, perspectives, and questions—whether orally, tactilely, symbolically, or in writing. The program presents ways to create environments and frame interactions that foster oral and written language development for all students, including discipline-specific academic language. Candidates learn to facilitate communication for students who use braille, tactile or pro-tactile American Sign Language, vocalizations, AAC devices, alternative learning media (e.g., large print, digital), or other communication strategies; they also learn to provide opportunities for experiential learning that support language development. The program focuses on instruction that values and leverages students' existing linguistic repertoires, including home languages and dialects, and that accepts and encourages translanguaging. The program promotes multilingualism and addresses multiliteracy in both English-medium and multilingual programs.

The program addresses the importance of developing students' language, including their knowledge of how language works and the impact of students' visual impairments on their language development. Candidates learn to support students' oral and written language development, including vocabulary knowledge and use, including descriptive vocabulary. The program highlights effective teaching of vocabulary both indirectly (through rich and varied language experiences, including multisensory learning; frequent independent reading; and word play/word consciousness) and directly (through the explicit teaching of general academic and discipline-specific terms and concepts and of independent word learning strategies, including morphology and etymology). The program also attends to grammatical and discourse-level understandings of language, including pragmatics. Candidates learn that grammatical structures (e.g., syntax) and vocabulary interact to form text types or genres that vary according

to purpose, intended audience, context, situation, and discipline. The program addresses ways to facilitate students' learning of complex sentence and text structures and emphasizes that students enrich their language as they read, write, speak, and listen; interact with one another; learn about language; create diverse oral, print, braille, digital, and multimodal texts; and engage with rich content across disciplines. Candidates learn to plan instruction based on the analysis of instructional materials and tasks; the assessment (formal and informal) of students' speaking, writing, or other communications; understanding of students' English language proficiency and literacy-related disabilities; and the integration of language development with other themes.

7d. Effective Expression

Coursework and supervised field experiences address effective oral and written expression, including how students learn to effectively express themselves as activity and discussion partners, presenters, and writers and to use digital media and multimodal displays to enhance their expression in a manner that is appropriate for their age and development. Candidates learn how to engage students in a range of interactions and collaborative conversations and to prioritize extended conversations with diverse partners on grade-level topics and texts and to facilitate communication for students who use tactile or pro-tactile American Sign Language, vocalizations, AAC devices, or other communication strategies, including nonverbal social skills. The program teaches candidates ways to support students' recognition and interpretation of the social and emotional content of interactions and to facilitate students' interpersonal engagement. Candidates learn to help students identify effective expression in what they read, listen to, and view as they examine the words, images, and organizational structures of written, oral, or visual texts, including the nonverbal and social interactions depicted or implied in the texts. Through the program, candidates learn to teach students to discuss, present, and write in ways that include multiple means of expression and that are appropriate to their age and development so that their meanings are conveyed clearly, logically, powerfully, and, when appropriate and desired, poetically. Candidates also learn how to help students communicate in ways appropriate for their purpose, audience, context, and task and gain command over the conventions of written and spoken English (along with other languages in multilingual programs) as they create print and digital texts. The program focuses on candidate instruction and supervised support that values and leverages students' existing languages and dialects, including translanguaging, and that promotes effective expression in languages other than English in both English-medium and multilingual programs.

Through coursework and supervised field experiences, candidates learn to engage students in writing for varied purposes and to prioritize daily writing, including informal writing, to support learning and reflection across disciplines. They also learn to teach students to plan, develop, provide feedback to peers, revise using peer and teacher feedback, edit, and produce their own writing and oral presentations in increasingly sophisticated genres, drawing on the modes of opinion/argumentation, information, and narration. Candidates learn the importance of supporting students to use braille writers; speech-to-text and text-to-speech technology; keyboarding; alternate file formats, including auditory versions; AAC and other assistive technology and learning media, as appropriate, and the value of developing spelling and handwriting fluency in the writing process. Candidates also learn to provide explicit instruction

in letter formation, through printing, producing braille, or using AAC and other assistive technology as needed, and related language conventions, such as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, in conjunction with applicable decoding skills. In addition, candidates learn to engage students in self- and peer-assessment using a range of tools and to allocate sufficient time for creation, reflection, and revision. The program teaches candidates to plan instruction based on the analysis of instructional materials and tasks; the assessment (formal and informal) of students' speaking, writing, or other communications; and the integration of effective expression with other themes.

7e. Content Knowledge

Coursework and supervised field experiences address content knowledge, which includes literary, cultural, and discipline-specific knowledge, as a powerful contributor to the comprehension of texts and sources of information and ideas. The program highlights the integration of literacy across disciplines and the reciprocal relationships among the development of academic language(s), literacy, and content knowledge. Additionally, the program promotes the collaboration of educators across disciplines to plan and implement instruction that maximizes students' development of literacy skills and content knowledge. The program also teaches candidates to understand that while building content knowledge enhances literacy development, it also serves to motivate many students, particularly when the content relevance is clear, reflects and values students' diverse experiences and cultures, and is responsive to their interests.

The program emphasizes the importance of full access to content instruction—including through printed, brailled, digital, and symbolic texts and other learning media, discussions, experimentation, and hands-on explorations—for all students. Candidates learn the particular importance of providing experiential learning, multisensory supports, and direct teaching of concepts that are typically learned incidentally for students with visual impairments. The program teaches candidates to provide the supports needed based on students' language proficiency levels or learning differences and addresses inclusive practices, including access to incidental learning experiences, multisensory instruction, and co-teaching models. The program helps candidates build students' understandings of disciplinary literacy—the ways in which disciplines use language and literacy to engage with content and communicate as members of discourse communities (e.g., historians, scientists). The program addresses the role of content knowledge as students navigate increasingly complex literary and informational texts, research questions of interest, evaluate the credibility of sources, and share knowledge as writers and speakers in ways that are appropriate to students' age and development. The program also teaches the importance of wide and independent reading in knowledge building and literacy development. In addition, the program provides multiple opportunities for candidates to learn how to promote digital literacy and the use of accessible educational and assistive technology, including the ability to find, evaluate, use, share, analyze, create, and communicate digital resources safely and responsibly, and to foster digital citizenship.⁹ The program teaches candidates to plan instruction based on the analysis of instructional materials, tasks, and student progress as well as the integration of content knowledge with other themes.

⁹ See [California Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance](#) for additional information.

7f. Literacy Instruction for Students with Disabilities

Coursework and supervised field experiences provide candidates an understanding of how visual impairments (ocular and cerebral), including deafblindness, and other disabilities can impact literacy instruction (e.g., dyslexia, dysgraphia, autism, speech-language challenges, varied cognitive abilities, executive function disorder, deaf and hard of hearing, varied orthopedic abilities). The program addresses how candidates can appropriately adapt, differentiate, and accommodate instruction to provide access to the curriculum -to meet the needs of individual learners with visual impairments. The program teaches candidates to understand that a student's membership in a particular disability category represents a label for a qualifying condition and that the specific effects of a student's disability and the range of educational needs, including sensory efficiency, functional vision, and learning media, within each category vary widely. Candidates learn that services should be based on individual need and not a qualifying condition. The program ensures that candidates understand Multi-Tiered System of Support and the value of providing initial, supplemental, and intensive instruction in inclusive settings, including co-teaching and the use of instructional support personnel, such as classroom assistants, interpreters/ interveners, AAC facilitators, and specialists for activities such as support during center rotations, working with students on individual goals, and facilitating whole group activities to allow candidates to work with students on individual goals. The program addresses the importance of data-based decision making to plan intensive intervention that is responsive to students' age and development, including (as appropriate) continued emphasis on early literacy skills to permit access to literacy and content across all disciplines.

Additionally, the program helps candidates understand how to collaborate with families and guardians, multidisciplinary teams (including, but not limited to, general education teachers, reading/language arts specialists, speech-language pathologists, school psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, interpreters/interveners, and teachers and specialists of students who are deaf and hard of hearing and visually impaired), and others to offer additional assessment¹⁰ and instructional support. The program also teaches candidates to provide appropriate adaptations (accommodations and modifications) and assistive technology that ensure equitable access to the curriculum for students with disabilities, including strategies such as fingerspelling decoding or pre-braille skills, as appropriate. The program addresses the importance of facilitating and supporting students' self-advocacy skills and opportunities for self-determination based on their individual needs to ensure access to appropriate adaptations (accommodations, modifications, and when necessary, compensatory strategies). The program also teaches candidates to understand the distinction between the characteristics of emerging bi/multilingualism and learning disabilities.¹¹ Candidates learn to collaborate with language development specialists to select appropriate assessments, review multiple factors when determining special education eligibility, and use assessment

¹⁰ See [Preliminary Education Specialist Credential Teaching Performance Expectations](#), Domain 5: Assessing Student Learning, for Visual Impairments for additional information.

¹¹ See the CDE 2019 publication, [California Practitioners Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities for additional information](#).

accommodations to ensure that multilingual and EL students are neither over- nor under-identified with disabilities and to provide needed and appropriate interventions.

The program incorporates the *California Dyslexia Guidelines*¹² through literacy coursework and (when possible) supervised field experiences that include the definition of dyslexia and its characteristics; screening and diagnostic assessment to determine literacy profiles and the risk for dyslexia and other potential reading and writing difficulties or disabilities; and effective approaches for teaching and adapting/differentiating instruction for students at risk for and with dyslexia and other literacy-related disabilities. Candidates learn to distinguish between the impacts of students' visual impairments and possible concurrence of dyslexia in literacy development and to plan instruction accordingly. Candidates learn that guiding principles for educating students at risk for and with dyslexia and other literacy-related disabilities are anchored in valid assessment and instructional practices that are evidence based and that incorporate structured literacy (i.e., instruction that is comprehensive, systematic, explicit, cumulative, and multimodal and that includes phonology, orthography, phonics, morphology, syntax, and semantics) along with other cognitive and perceptual supports.

7g. Integrated and Designated English Language Development

Coursework and supervised field experiences emphasize that ELD should be integrated into ELA and all other content instruction and build on students' cultural and linguistic assets, including their home languages and dialects. The program also emphasizes that comprehensive ELD includes both integrated and designated ELD and is part of Tier 1 instruction. Candidates learn how integrated and designated ELD are related, building into and from one another, and how designated ELD should be taught in connection with (rather than isolated from) content areas and topics. Candidates also learn the impact of visual impairments on language development and the implications for ELD for English learner students with visual impairments. Through coursework and supervised field experiences, candidates learn to provide integrated ELD in which English learner students are taught to use and understand English to access and make meaning of academic content throughout the school day and across disciplines. Candidates learn to use the ELA/literacy standards (or other content standards) and ELD standards in tandem¹³ to plan instruction that advances English learner students' academic and language development, strengthening students' abilities to use academic English as they simultaneously learn content. The program teaches candidates to design instruction that is appropriate for students' literacy profiles, levels of English language proficiency, prior educational experiences, and strengths and needs related to functional vision, learning media, and the expanded core curriculum. Candidates also learn to design instruction that develops students' abilities to use English purposefully, interact in meaningful ways, and understand how English works. To the extent possible, the program provides supervised field experiences for candidates that include English learner students and recently reclassified English learner students.

Through the program, candidates learn that designated ELD is a part of the regular school day in which English learner students are taught English language skills critical for engaging in

¹² See [California Education Code 44259\(b\)\(4\)](#)

¹³ See [California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 11300\(a, c\)](#).

grade-level content learning. Candidates learn that designated ELD instruction is tailored to students' proficiency on the English language development continuum, based on the ELD standards. Candidates also learn to use the ELD standards as the focus of instruction in ways that support content area instruction, building into and from specific topics of study. Through the program, candidates learn the importance of coordinating with classroom teachers and other specialists and supporting classroom instruction so that English learner students with visual impairments and other disabilities receive comprehensive ELD instruction.

7h. Literacy Teaching Performance Expectations and Supervised Clinical Practice

The program teaches all elements of the Literacy Teaching Performance Expectations and provides instruction, practice, and informal feedback and self-assessment focused on the knowledge, skills, and abilities required by any required local and/or state literacy performance assessments. Supervised, guided practice in clinical settings¹⁴ provides opportunities for candidates to apply what they have learned and to gain feedback on how to improve and/or develop their practice to meet the learning needs of their students.

¹⁴ See [Preliminary Education Specialist Credential Program Standards](#), Standard 2: Preparing Candidates to Master the *Teaching Performance Expectations* and Standard 3: Clinical Practice, for additional information.

TPE Domain 7: Effective Literacy Instruction for Students with Visual Impairments

- 7.1 Plan and implement evidence-based literacy^{1,2} instruction grounded in an understanding of applicable literacy-related academic standards (California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, California English Language Development Standards, California Braille Reading Standards, California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations, and California Preschool Learning Foundations); the themes of the *California English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework* (Foundational Skills, Meaning Making, Language Development, Effective Expression, and Content Knowledge) and their integration; and the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework* and *California Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework*.
- 7.2 Plan and implement evidence-based literacy instruction grounded in an understanding of Universal Design for Learning; California's Multi-Tiered System of Support (Tier 1–Best first instruction, Tier 2–Targeted, supplemental instruction, and Tier 3–Intensive intervention); the impact of visual impairments on language and literacy development; the *California Guidelines for Programs Serving Students with Visual Impairments*; and the *California Dyslexia Guidelines*, including the definition and characteristics of dyslexia and structured literacy (i.e., instruction for students at risk for and with dyslexia that is comprehensive, systematic, explicit, cumulative, and multimodal and that includes phonology, orthography, phonics, morphology, syntax, and semantics).
- 7.3 Incorporate evidence-based asset-based pedagogies,³ inclusive approaches (as appropriate based on assessed functional vision, learning media, and expanded core curriculum needs), and culturally and linguistically affirming and sustaining practices in literacy instruction recognizing and incorporating the diversity of students' cultures,

¹ Literacy comprises reading, writing, speaking, and listening; these processes are closely intertwined and should be understood to include oral, written, multimodal, and visual communication. The themes of the *ELA/ELD Framework* (Foundational Skills, Meaning Making, Language Development, Effective Expression, and Content Knowledge) crosscut the four strands of the ELA/literacy standards (Reading [Literature, Informational Text, Foundational Skills], Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language) and the three parts of the ELD standards (Interacting in Meaningful Ways [Communicative Modes], Learning About How English Works [Language Processes], and Using Foundational Literacy Skills). In practice, these themes, strands, and parts are overlapping and should be integrated among themselves and across all disciplines.

² For students with visual impairments the terms reading, writing, listening, and speaking should be broadly interpreted. For example, reading could include the use of braille, screen-reader technology, or other communication technologies or assistive devices, while writing could include the use of a scribe, computer, or speech-to-text technology. In a similar vein, speaking and listening for students who identify as deafblind could include tactile or pro-tactile American Sign Language, sign-supported speech, or other means of communication.

³ [Asset-based pedagogies](#) view the diversity that students bring to the classroom, including culture, language, disability, socio-economic status, immigration status, and sexuality as characteristics that add value and strength to classrooms and communities. Culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and funds of knowledge are all approaches that affirm students' cultural lives—both family and community—and incorporate this knowledge into the classroom and collectively deem students' lived experiences as assets. These practices affirm the diversity that students bring to the classroom and include instructional approaches that leverage the cultural and linguistic experiences of students to make learning more relevant and effective.

languages, dialects, communication needs, and home communities. Promote students' literacy development in languages other than English in multilingual (dual language and bilingual education) programs.⁴

- 7.4 Provide evidence-based literacy instruction for students with visual impairments that considers the implications of functional vision, learning media, and the expanded core curriculum, including instruction using alternate media such as braille and digital text, adapted materials, and low-vision and AAC devices, and that is active, motivating, and engaging; responsive to students' age, language and literacy development, communication needs, and literacy goals; reflective of family engagement, social and emotional learning, and trauma-informed practices; and based on students' assessed learning strengths and needs, analysis of instructional methods, materials, and tasks, and identified academic standard.
- 7.5 **Foundational Skills.**⁵ Develop students' skills in print/braille concepts, including letters of the print and braille alphabets, including contracted braille; phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness; phonics, spelling, and word recognition, including letter-sound, spelling-sound, and sound-symbol correspondences; decoding and encoding; morphological awareness; and text reading fluency, including accuracy, prosody (expression), and rate (as an indicator of automaticity), through instruction that is structured and organized as well as direct, systematic, and explicit and that includes practice in connected, decodable text. Provide instruction in text reading fluency that emphasizes spelling and syllable patterns, semantics, morphology, and syntax. Advance students' progress in the elements of foundational skills, language, and cognitive skills that support them as they read and write increasingly complex disciplinary texts with comprehension and effective expression.
- 7.6 **Meaning Making.** Engage students in meaning making by building on prior knowledge and using complex literary and informational texts (print, braille, digital, and oral/tactile/symbolic), questioning, experiential multisensory and hands-on learning, and discussion to develop students' literal and inferential comprehension, including the higher-order cognitive skills of reasoning, perspective taking, and critical reading, writing, listening, and speaking across the disciplines. Engage students in reading, listening, speaking, writing, and viewing closely to draw evidence from texts, ask and answer questions, and support analysis, reflection, and research.
- 7.7 **Language Development.** Promote students' language development by attending to vocabulary knowledge and use, grammatical structures (e.g., syntax), discourse-level understandings, pragmatics as students read, listen, speak or communicate symbolically or tactilely, and write with comprehension and effective expression. Create environments that foster students' language development, including discipline-specific academic language. Enhance language development by engaging students in

⁴ See updated [Bilingual Authorization Program Standards and new Bilingual Teaching Performance Expectations](#) for program standards and Teaching Performance Expectations specific to multilingual programs.

⁵ See also the [Resource Guide to the Foundational Skills of the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects](#).

experiential learning and in the creation of diverse print, digital, and multimedia texts. Conduct instruction that leverages students' existing linguistic repertoires, including home languages and dialects, and that accepts and encourages translanguaging.

- 7.8 **Effective Expression.** Develop students' effective expression as they write, discuss, present, and use language conventions. Engage students in a range of frequent formal and informal collaborative discussions, including extended conversations, and writing for varied purposes, audiences, and contexts. Teach students to plan, develop, provide feedback to peers, revise using peer and teacher feedback, edit, and produce their own writing presentations in various genres, drawing on the modes of opinion/ argumentation, information, and narration. Develop students' use of keyboarding and/or other assistive technology, such as braille writers, and multimedia, as appropriate, and fluency in spelling, handwriting, and other language conventions to support writing and presentations. Teach young children letter formation, through printing and/or producing braille, and related language conventions, such as capitalization and punctuation, in conjunction with applicable decoding skills.
- 7.9 **Content Knowledge.** Promote students' content knowledge by engaging students in literacy instruction, in all pertinent content areas, that integrates reading, writing, listening, and speaking or communicating symbolically or tactilely in discipline-specific ways, including through printed, brailled, and digital texts and multimedia, discussions, experiential multisensory and hands-on learning, experimentation, and wide and independent reading. Teach students to navigate increasingly complex literary and informational texts relevant to the discipline, research questions of interest, and convey knowledge in a variety of ways. Promote digital literacy and the use of educational technology, including the ability to find, evaluate, use, share, analyze, create, and communicate digital resources safely and responsibly, and foster digital citizenship.⁶
- 7.10 Monitor students' progress in literacy development using formative assessment practices, ongoing progress monitoring, and diagnostic techniques that inform instructional decision making.⁷ Understand how to use screening and diagnostic assessments to determine students' literacy profiles; identify potential reading and writing difficulties, including students' risk for dyslexia, communication needs, and other literacy-related disabilities; and determine students' strengths and needs in functional vision, learning media, and expanded core curriculum and their programmatic implications. Understand how to appropriately assess and interpret results for English learner students.⁸ Collaborate with families and guardians as well as with teachers, specialists, other professionals, and administrators from the school or district to facilitate comprehensive assessment for disabilities in English and as appropriate in the home language; plan and provide Tier 2 supplemental instruction in inclusive settings;

⁶ See [California Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance](#) for additional information.

⁷ See [Preliminary Education Specialist Credential Teaching Performance Expectations](#), Domain 5: Assessing Student Learning, for Education Specialist Visual Impairments for additional information.

⁸ See [California Practitioners' Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities](#) for additional information.

and formulate and implement individualized intervention for students who need Tier 3 intensive support.

- 7.11 Provide instruction in English language development (ELD) for students with visual impairments who are also identified as English learner students based on an understanding of comprehensive ELD, which includes both integrated and designated ELD and is part of Tier 1 instruction. Understand how integrated and designated ELD are related and how designated ELD is taught in connection with (rather than isolated from) content areas and topics. Use ELA/literacy standards (or other content standards) and ELD standards in tandem to plan instruction that attends to students' literacy profiles, levels of English language proficiency, prior educational experiences, and strengths and needs related to functional vision, learning media, and the expanded core curriculum. Provide ELD instruction that builds on students' cultural and linguistic assets and develops students' abilities to use English purposefully, interact in meaningful ways, and understand how English works across the disciplines.
- 7.12 Collaborate with multidisciplinary teams (e.g., families and guardians, general education teachers, speech-language pathologists, school psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, AAC facilitators, DHH teachers and specialists) when determining eligibility for special education services, interpreting assessment results, and planning necessary adaptations (accommodations and modifications) for students with visual impairments who may have a secondary disability, such as dyslexia or another disability that impacts literacy development.
- 7.13 Collaborate with classroom teachers, school literacy and language specialists, school administrators, and other service providers (e.g., speech-language pathologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, instructional assistants, interpreters/interveners, AAC facilitators) to provide day-to-day supplemental instruction and/or intensive intervention in literacy within a classroom or non-classroom environment (e.g., in-class support, co-teaching, inclusion, self-contained special education classrooms, small-group instruction specialized settings), including early and/or functional literacy, as appropriate, that ensures access to grade-level literacy instruction that aligns with state-adopted standards, incorporates the *California Dyslexia Guidelines*, and addresses individual IEP goals.
- 7.14 Utilize assistive technology (e.g., braille writers; keyboarding; speech-to-text/text-to-speech; alternative file formats, including audio; multimedia; AAC) and multiple means of communication (e.g., tactile and pro-tactile American Sign Language, voice output devices) as needed to support the teaching of literacy that integrates reading, writing, listening, and speaking or communicating tactilely in discipline-specific ways.